

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

O! Ye that love mankind!! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the Old World is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe... O! receive the fugitive and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Thomas Paine, Common Sense, 1776

Beginnings of Revolution:

1774-1776

Intolerable Acts of 1774 led many Americans to believe separation was only answer

First Continental Congress, consisting of all but Georgia met to determine the direction to be taken to preserve the rights and liberties being threatened (independence was not the solution but rather the restoration of English rights)

Delegates consisted of radicals, moderates, and conservatives

Radicals:

Patrick Henry of Virginia

Sam Adams of Massachusetts

Moderates:

George Washington of Virginia

John Dickinson of Pennsylvania

Conservatives:

John Jay of New York

Joseph Galloway of Pennsylvania

NOT REPRESENTED WAS THE VIEWPOINT OF LOYALIST

Acts of Congress:

Proposed measures intended to change British policy without offending moderates and conservatives.

Galloway proposed a plan similar to the Albany Plan of 1754 keeping the American colonies a part of the British Empire. It failed by one vote!

Adopted were:

- The Suffolk Resolves, originally enacted in Massachusetts, urged colonial resistance to Intolerable Acts by making military preparations and use of economic sanctions (boycott)
- Backed by moderate delegates, the Declaration of Rights and Grievances was a petition to the king seeking restoration of colonial rights. It also recognized Parliament's authority to regulate commerce.
- Creation of the Association to enforce economic sanctions of the Suffolk Resolves.
- Established May 1775 as meeting of second congress if rights were not recognized

FIGHTING BEGINS

- Petition rejected by King
- Lexington & Concord
 - Gage
 - Suffered humiliation

- Bunker Hill
 - June 17, 1775
 - Americans withdrew after inflicting heavy damages – over 1000 casualties
- Second Continental Congress
 - May 1775 in Philadelphia
 - Divided between delegates of New England (favored independence) and middle colonies (sought to negotiate settlement)
- Military Actions
 - Declaration of the Causes and Necessities for Taking Up Arms
 - Called for colonies to supply troops
 - G. Washington named commander-in-chief of colonial army & sent to Boston
 - B. Arnold authorized to raid Quebec in effort to pull Canada away from Great Britain
 - American navy and marine corps organized to attack British shipping
- Peace Efforts
 - “Olive Branch Petition”
 - effort to make amends with crown and to secure protection of colonial rights
 - King rejected plea
 - Parliament passed Prohibitory Act (August 1775) declaring colonies in rebellion & forbidding all trade and shipping between England and the colonies
- Thomas Paine
 - Common Sense*
- The Declaration of Independence
 - Richard Henry Lee’s resolution for independence June 7, 1776
 - Thomas Jefferson wrote document
 - Provided grievances against crown
 Expressed basic principles justifying revolution
- War
 - 2.6 million people in colonies
 - some 40% sided with rebellion
 - some 20-30% remained loyal (New York, New Jersey, & Georgia)
 - remainder neutral
 - American regular army some 20,000 max
 - 5000 African-Americans fought
 - 60,000 Tories fought (named after ruling party)
 - tended to be wealthier and more conservative
 - government officials and Anglican clergy
 - aided by most Native Americans
 - 1775-1777 Problems
 - lost New York City & Philadelphia
 - Valley Forge
 - 95% decline in trade
 - inflation
 - scarcity of goods
 - Continentals lacked value
 - American victory at Saratoga led to outside aid
 - France, Spain, & Holland

- Victory
 - 1778-1781
 - Georges Rogers Clark
 - Southern base of operations by British
 - Yorktown
- Treaty of Paris – 1783
 - Recognition of United States as independent nation
 - Mississippi River to be westward boundary
 - Americans have fishing rights off Canada
 - Americans would pay debts to British merchants and Loyalists for property confiscated during war